

Skunks Raccoon Squirrels Woodchucks Bats Mice Rats Snakes Rabbits

Cold Weather Can Bring Unwanted House Guests!

When the temperature drops, having a warm place to eat and sleep is not limited to humankind. Creatures that normally make their home outdoors start to look for shelter from the cold environment to a place that is warm and easily accessible to food. Attics, interior walls, sheds, storage containers and furniture pieces are just a few places where rats, mice, squirrels and other wildlife will nest as the weather changes.

ACT NOW! Do not wait until there is a problem. Make sure:

- doors close tightly with no gaps at the bottom.
- windows near ground level have tight fitting screens.
- holes and openings are sealed with heavy-weight material.
- gaps in walls and baseboards are plugged with copper mesh, steel wool or hardware cloth.

Take steps to discourage wildlife from taking up residence in the first place. Keep your surroundings clean and uncluttered, and eliminate food sources.

- DO NOT store garbage outside in plastic bags.
- DO NOT leave pet food outside. Store in a rat-proof container with tight-fitting lids. This includes birdseed and grass seed.
- DO remove piles of debris or building materials that may provide shelter.
- DO remove pet droppings/waste every day.

If wildlife has entered your living space, – a snake, raccoon or squirrel in your bedroom, kitchen or living room – call the Emergency Communication Center at 301-279-8000 and an Animal Services Officer will be dispatched to assist you.

For more information on protecting your home from rodents and wildlife, and how to get rid of unwanted creatures, visit the following:

DHCA "Control of Rats and Mice" –

<http://montgomerycountymd.gov/DHCA/resources/files/ratbroch.pdf>

Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center –

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/animalservices/asd/wildlifefaq.html>

Maryland Department of Natural Resources –

http://dnr2.maryland.gov/Wildlife/Pages/plants_wildlife/wildlifeproblems.aspx